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Chair: Mr. Ružička ..... (Slovakia)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/69/L.30)

1. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller) said that the Organization faced complex challenges in achieving its goals of a better and more secure world. In a difficult global economic climate it was expected to strengthen accountability and deliver tangible results by maximizing the efficient use of resources without jeopardizing programmes. The Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts was committed to ensuring sound financial management and to providing the Committee with accurate and complete budgetary and financial information. In addition to preparing clear and timely budget proposals, her priorities included the implementation of two business transformation initiatives: the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and the financial modules of the Umoja enterprise resource planning system, which would improve transparency and efficiency, strengthen internal controls and reinforce excellence in management and programme delivery.

2. **The Chair** invited the Committee to consider the proposed tentative and provisional programme of work for the first part of the resumed sixty-ninth session, prepared on the basis of the note by the Secretariat on the status of preparedness of documentation (A/C.5/69/L.30). He informed the Committee that all of the reports of the Secretariat had been issued. Given the Committee's full schedule and the deferral of several items from the main part of the session, the programme of work had been prepared to make the best use of the available time, on the understanding that changes to it would be made as the session progressed. The cooperation of all stakeholders was needed in order to finalize the Committee's work by the date scheduled.

3. **Mr. Mamabolo** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group was committed to the thorough consideration of such matters as the capital master plan and human resources management, which had been deferred from the main part of the session. It remained concerned about the status of the documentation for the session. The late issuance of important reports was a chronic problem. The timely submission and issuance in all official languages of Secretariat and Advisory Committee reports, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, were essential to the Committee's work.

4. **Mr. Oña Garcés** (Ecuador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, said that the proposed programme of work contained matters of great importance to the Community, including accountability, the capital master plan, human resources management, Umoja and the operational arrangements and conditions of service of the Advisory Committee.

5. The matters deferred from the main part of the session should be resolved through an inclusive, transparent and constructive approach. On procurement, the transparency and accountability of the United Nations procurement system should be improved and opportunities for vendors from developing countries enhanced.

6. Delays in the issuance of reports adversely affected the Committee's proceedings and negotiations, and its ability to finish its work on time. The Secretariat should respond to the calls in various resolutions for reports to be issued within established deadlines in accordance with the rules of procedure. Delegations should respect the date set for the closure of the first part of the resumed session and avoid the prolongation of negotiations, as had occurred at the main part of the session. Such delays did not reflect the efficiency for which Member States had been calling for decades in successive General Assembly resolutions, and had a significant impact on the activities and mandates of the United Nations. Accountability at the institutional and personal levels should be strengthened so as to improve the Organization's administrative and budgetary functioning.

7. **Mr. Presutti** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that his delegation had already expressed its position on the matters deferred from the main part of the session, including human resources management, the capital master plan, Umoja, the United Nations Partnerships Facility, the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia and recosting, and would elaborate on them in informal consultations.

The other matters before the Committee, including procurement, air travel, flexible workplace strategies and accountability, in particular risk management, deserved its full attention.

8. The programme of work must be completed by the date scheduled, and could be if delegations engaged constructively in the discussions. Timely completion would show that the Committee was capable of finishing its deliberations within the agreed time frame and in compliance with procedure. Unprecedented delays in the issuance of documentation at the main part of the session had significantly affected the Committee's deliberations. The timely issuance of documents in all languages was essential, and all involved in document production should intensify their efforts in that regard.

9. The European Union looked forward to discussing issues related to procurement, in particular the use of Umoja to enable strategic procurement management, improved air charter procurement and the enhancement of efficiency through improved mission-critical contracts. Procurement should be sustainable and based on requirements, specifications and criteria which supported environmental protection, social progress and economic development.

10. The decisions taken regarding recosting at the main part of the session must be honoured: the General Assembly must act on the recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel of Experts on the study on recosting and options available to the Organization in dealing with fluctuations in exchange rates and inflation (A/69/381). The European Union, fully aware of the concerns of some Member States, was prepared to discuss the matter constructively in order to achieve progress.

11. The European Union hoped to build on the progress made at the main part of the session in human resources management, with a view to reaching a speedy conclusion. Although the question of the personal status of staff was not formally before the Committee, the European Union reiterated that the Secretary-General had been acting within his purview in issuing his bulletin on personal status for purposes of United Nations entitlements (ST/SGB/2004/13/Rev.1).

12. As the implementation of the capital master plan neared completion, delegations should agree on a final settlement encompassing all aspects of the project.

13. The European Union hoped that the Committee would conclude its discussion of Umoja at the current part of the resumed session, and, to that end, would make every effort to resolve outstanding problems. Umoja was essential to the effective pursuit of United Nations goals. Substantial progress had been made, and the European Union looked forward to reaping the full benefits of Umoja and a return on Member States' investment in the system.

14. **Mr. Ono** (Japan) said that the Partnerships Facility embodied great potential while providing coherence, oversight and accountability. Member States must be flexible so that the Facility could become operational by September 2015, when the sustainable development goals would be adopted.

15. The implementation of Umoja was essential and his Government expected a return on its investment. He also welcomed the impending completion of the capital master plan project; delegations should be creative in determining final appropriations, including those for associated costs and the cost of the secondary data centre, while monitoring changes in the cash balance resulting from the use of the bridging mechanism.

16. At the main part of the session, Member States had agreed to consider the report of the High-level Panel of Experts on the study on recosting (A/69/381) at the first part of the resumed session, and should now find common ground with a view to improving the dysfunctional recosting process.

17. Human resources management was essential to the efficient operation of the United Nations. His delegation had been disappointed by the failure to reach an agreement at the main part of the session and looked forward to continuing discussions while avoiding stalemate. The young professionals programme had an important role. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's report on the programme (A/69/190/Add.3), in particular the changes designed to facilitate the simultaneous conduct of examinations in multiple time zones and to reduce processing and marking costs.

18. In addition to the questions deferred from the main part of the session, many matters, including accountability, air travel, procurement and the strategic capital review, were now before the Committee for the first time. The first part of the resumed session would be one of the busiest in recent years and Member

States should make every effort to conclude the Committee's deliberations by the scheduled date.

19. The difficult negotiations at the main part of the session had been a reminder that all parties should show flexibility in the interest of consensus. Parties showing flexibility should not see themselves as losing ground but as enabling success for all. Delegations should work constructively and cooperatively rather than in opposition.

20. **Ms. Coleman** (United States of America) said, with regard to human resources management, that her delegation would protect the Secretary-General's broad prerogative to manage staff under his authority. Delegations should refrain from politicizing the budgetary and administrative matters before the Committee, which was not a forum for Member States to undermine essential rights related to race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.

21. With respect to other deferred items, good progress had been made on Umoja and her delegation trusted that the item could be concluded quickly. On the Partnerships Facility, she hoped to find a way forward that would enhance the work of the United Nations and provide greater transparency for Member States. The Committee had an opportunity to conclude its consideration of the capital master plan, but the financing of the associated costs should be shared in order to minimize the assessment on Member States. The question of recosting must also be addressed, since the current volatility of the budget undermined Member States' ability to exercise fiscal responsibility.

22. Many of the matters before the Committee for the first time provided opportunities to improve the efficiency of the United Nations and its ability to respond to critical needs around the world. The Committee should engage in a dialogue on ways of improving its decision-making process. At the main part of the session, delegations had been polarized and too ready to abandon the principle of consensus. Given the significant impact of the Committee's decisions on the work of the United Nations, delegations should ensure that the Committee functioned rationally, avoid politicization, and ensure that their decisions were fiscally responsible and improved the Organization's functioning.

23. **Mr. Khalizov** (Russian Federation) said that the Secretariat should act decisively to prevent the late issuance of documents. Reform of the operational arrangements for the Advisory Committee should be agreed upon and carried out swiftly, as resolution of the matter was essential to ensuring the timely issuance of the Advisory Committee's reports.

24. In the discussions on human resources management, his delegation would pay close attention to the parameters for the implementation of mandatory mobility. The Secretariat should provide the most detailed information possible. The Secretary-General must urgently revoke his bulletin on personal status for purposes of United Nations entitlements (ST/SGB/2004/13/Rev.1), which ran counter to General Assembly resolution 58/285, had financial and legal implications which had not been evaluated, and enabled the fraudulent manipulation of personal status.

25. With respect to the other items to be taken up at the current part of the session, the latest information on the associated costs of the capital master plan must be used to ensure that Member States paid no more than was necessary for the project's completion. The Secretariat must also provide clear plans setting out the benefits of implementing Umoja. The problems related to the establishment of the Partnerships Facility persisted; his delegation looked forward to receiving additional clarification from the Secretariat and endorsed the Advisory Committee's comments on the matter in its first report on the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/68/7).

26. **Mr. Hashmi** (Pakistan) said that delegations should show the flexibility and political will needed to reach consensus on the matters deferred from the main part of the session. The Bureau must work closely with delegations in considering organizational matters. Decisions on the timelines for the conclusion of informal consultations and the deferral of matters that were not time-bound must be taken in an open, transparent and inclusive manner. The Bureau's work should be guided by established practice and institutional memory, and adequate time should be allocated for each agenda item, taking into account its significance and complexity.

27. At the main part of the session the Committee had been obliged to address such important matters as the first performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/69/612) and the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/69/416) at the eleventh hour owing to late submission. Such delays adversely affected the

Committee's deliberations and organization of work. Documents must be issued in a timely fashion to ensure due diligence. The problem was systemic, long-standing and complex and had never been satisfactorily addressed. The Committee should address it as part of the efforts to improve its working methods.

28. **The Chair** said that he took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed programme of work on the understanding that it would be adjusted by the Bureau as necessary during the course of the session.

29. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 138: Joint Inspection Unit (A/69/34 and A/69/747)

30. **Mr. Flores Callejas** (Chair, Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) for 2014 and programme of work for 2015 (A/69/34), said that in 2014 the Unit had produced six system-wide reports and one note addressing policies for coherence, management and risk issues in the areas of resource mobilization; capital refurbishment and construction; environmental governance; the evaluation function; the use of non-staff personnel; contract management and administration; and the use of retirees. In addition, it had completed reviews of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the World Tourism Organization and the World Intellectual Property Organization. The reports and reviews contained concrete, action-oriented recommendations that, once implemented, would result in tangible management improvements and enhanced organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

31. The Unit had continued its reform process by making improvements in strategic planning and priority-setting, and by adopting new working methods, including an improved consultation process for the selection of subjects for its programme of work. In General Assembly resolution 68/266, Member States had agreed that the web-based tracking system provided an excellent platform for monitoring progress in acceptance and implementation of recommendations. Unfortunately, no dedicated funding under the regular budget was provided for the maintenance and hosting of that important system and JIU was able to keep it operational only as a result of a one-time extrabudgetary contribution by a Member State. The Unit's only request for additional resources under the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017 was to ensure the continuous operation of the tracking system.

32. The fact that the current budget submission process for JIU was not in full conformity with articles 17 and 20 of the Unit's statute hampered the independence of the Unit and prevented it from achieving its full potential. The Unit therefore requested that its original budget proposal should be submitted for the Committee's consideration together with the comments of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and the Advisory Committee.

33. The Unit was playing a leading role in the system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development. With contributions from Member States and United Nations system organizations, two pilot evaluation projects were being implemented that, once finished, would provide input for the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development.

34. **Mr. Herman** (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination), introducing the note by the Secretary-General on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2014 (A/69/747), said that CEB continued to support the Unit, primarily by compiling responses to JIU reports of system-wide concern. For each of those reports, the CEB secretariat, on behalf of the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chair of CEB, requested comments from across the system on both the methodology used to produce the reports and the recommendations contained therein. Those responses were compiled into a note by the Secretary-General that reflected the overall consensus of the United Nations system on the reports, although each individual organization could choose to address specific recommendations within the framework of reporting by their governing bodies. The notes by the Secretary-General ensured that Member States were provided with a balanced view when considering JIU reports.

35. In recent years, as a result of the strengthened working relationship between JIU and CEB, organizations were increasingly satisfied with the outcomes presented in those reports. In response to a request by CEB, the Unit had increased its study of issues that had a system-wide impact, and the close collaboration between those two inter-agency bodies had been further intensified. However, the CEB

secretariat performed those actions within existing and very limited resources. As JIU continued to implement its decade-long strategic framework and increase its system-wide focus, the strain on CEB resources would continue.

36. The Secretary-General, as Chair of CEB, had urged all organizations to ensure a full and timely response to requests from JIU for information and to follow up on its recommendations. The subsidiary mechanisms of CEB continued to consult with JIU inspectors during the preparation of system-wide reports. The United Nations system placed a high value on the work of JIU, and the continued dialogue between the secretariats of CEB and JIU had improved cooperation and collaboration. CEB would continue to maintain its close working relationship with JIU, particularly in view of the Unit's increased focus on system-wide issues and its follow-up of the implementation of recommendations.

37. **Ms. Lingenfelder** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to the work of JIU and its reports on systemic issues. It therefore welcomed the measures taken by the Unit to improve its strategic planning, professionalize its staff, upgrade its working methods and procedures, and improve coordination, with an emphasis on quality control and knowledge management and sharing.

38. The Group welcomed the efforts made by the Unit in carrying out its programme of work for 2014. It noted with encouragement that, of the nine reports and one note addressed to the participating organizations, seven were system-wide reviews. The legislative organs of all participating organizations should discuss JIU reports and fully implement the accepted recommendations. The review of the management and administration of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (JIU/REP/2014/7) was of particular interest as the Unit's first full-scope review of the Office in more than a decade. Once the report had been considered by the Human Rights Council, it might usefully be taken up by the Third and Fifth Committees.

39. The Group was seriously concerned that JIU had been working with a very restricted budget despite the increasing demand from its stakeholders for system-wide reviews and evaluations. It was also of great concern that the Unit's current budget submission process was not in full conformity with article 20 of its statute. The Unit should have full operational independence and should be allocated appropriate resources to enable it to fully implement its mandate.

40. The Group commended the ongoing reform of JIU, including the redesign of its programme of work and measures to enhance outreach to Member States and participating organizations, and to improve relationships with other oversight and coordinating bodies. It fully supported efforts to further improve the Unit's working methods and noted with interest the adoption of a longer-term planning approach for the work of JIU and the approval of a two-year rolling roster of projects.

41. The Group was pleased that JIU continued to share information on its programme of work, experience and best practices with other oversight bodies, including the Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services. Close coordination would prevent overlap and duplication of efforts and ensure further synergies and cooperation.

42. It was regrettable that Member States had failed in some instances to abide by General Assembly resolutions mandating the issuance of visas for official travel of JIU inspectors. All Member States should extend, without conditions, the requisite cooperation to enable individual inspectors to undertake their tasks. The Group valued the principle of an enhanced role for JIU, the only independent, external oversight body of the United Nations system.

Agenda item 132: Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (*continued*)

Safety and security: Programme criticality
(A/69/530 and A/69/786)

43. **Ms. Gasarabwe** (Assistant Secretary-General for Safety and Security), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the conclusions of the High-level Working Group on Programme Criticality (A/69/530), said that the programme criticality framework was an operational tool designed to assist managers in the field in taking time-sensitive decisions in response to changes in local security conditions.

44. In the past, the United Nations had been criticized for being too risk-averse but also for placing its personnel at unnecessary risk. In response, it had shifted from a "when to leave" model to the "stay and

deliver" approach; accordingly, in 2009, it had adopted the United Nations security management system guidelines for acceptable risk. Under those guidelines two tools were required: a security risk assessment and a programme criticality level assessment. The former had already existed under the United Nations security management system, but the latter had been missing. In 2010, the High-level Working Group on Programme Criticality had been established to develop a common framework for informed decision-making. Following field testing, the programme criticality framework had been approved by the High-level Committee on Management and endorsed by CEB.

45. The framework detailed guiding principles, including applicability, accountability, quality assurance and approval. It also described the process for determining programme criticality levels for specific United Nations activities and was an important part of the decision-making process in determining which risks were acceptable when conducting specific United Nations programmes. While the Organization needed to implement its "stay and deliver" approach, it would also ensure that programmes were delivered within acceptable risk levels so that its personnel took no unnecessary risks when delivering critical programmes. The programme criticality tool was designed to be used at the field level, including in peacekeeping operations and special political missions; it also applied to any country with a medium residual risk level in which a change in the security situation was anticipated.

46. Under the framework, which had been rolled out in 15 countries by October 2014, an Organization-wide programme criticality assessment was mandatory in areas with residual risk levels of "high" and "very high" as determined by the security risk assessments. In its resolution 68/101, the General Assembly had expressed deep concern that attacks and threats against United Nations and associated personnel increasingly restricted the provision of assistance and protection to populations in need, and had commended United Nations and other humanitarian personnel on their commitment to stay and deliver the most critical programmes, even in dangerous environments. In resolution 69/133, the Assembly had encouraged the Secretary-General to continue implementing the programme criticality framework. The Policy Committee had decided that all United Nations system organizations would reiterate the status of the programme criticality framework as official policy and the requirements for its mandatory application. To date, programme criticality assessments had been conducted in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, the State of Palestine, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

47. As a decision-making tool for programme managers, the programme criticality framework did not affect oversight and accountability, nor did it have an impact on human resources. The framework was not a planning process and it did not replace or amend the strategic priorities of the Organization, which were determined through well-established processes. The programme criticality methodology used United Nations planning documents and frameworks already agreed at the country level — such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the integrated strategic framework and the consolidated appeal process — to assess programme criticality levels. The results of the assessment enabled country-level programme managers to determine whether programme activities or implementation modalities should be redesigned in order to ensure that they were within known acceptable risk or to reduce the risk. In essence, the purpose was to identify programmes that required additional risk management measures so as to ensure that the Organization could deliver the most important parts of the programmes agreed with Member States.

48. The programme criticality managing and coordinating bodies were considering options for future oversight and coordination functions. In 2015, which was envisaged as a transitional period, there would be continued support for roll-out in the field, dissemination of e-learning and best practices, development of an online platform for managing results, and conduct of train-the-trainer programmes. January 2016 was the target for the full institutionalization of the programme criticality framework, with the aim of making it a self-sustaining part of the functioning of the Organization. Thereafter only minimal support would be required for its implementation, comprising a small part-time secretariat and support provided mainly through online resources and ad hoc videoconferences between Headquarters and the field.

49. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/69/786), said that the Advisory Committee recognized the importance of the programme criticality framework and its contribution to staff safety and security. However, it noted that the report of the Secretary-General did not contain the final conclusions of the High-level Working Group on Programme Criticality for the General Assembly's consideration and approval, as requested in General Assembly resolution 67/254 A. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Assembly should request the Secretary-General once again to submit, as soon as possible, a report containing the final conclusions.

50. Regarding the funding of the programme, the Advisory Committee considered that the contribution of $10,000 from the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support should not have been charged to the support account for peacekeeping operations; it would review the matter further in the context of its consideration of the Secretary-General's report on the proposed budget for the support account for the 2015/16 period.

51. **Mr. Davidson** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that safety and security were important for all United Nations personnel, operations and premises, and the Group would continue to support measures designed to ensure a coherent, effective, accountable and timely response to security threats and other emergencies. However, the primary responsibility for ensuring the safety and security of United Nations personnel and premises lay with the host country, and provisions for safety and security implemented by the United Nations could not work in isolation or without due consultation with Member States. The security level system should therefore provide for close coordination and collaboration with the host country.

52. While the Group recognized the efforts undertaken by the High-level Working Group on Programme Criticality, it noted that the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/530) lacked detail on the operational functioning of the initiative. It was also concerned that the Secretary-General had not submitted the final conclusions of the High-level Working Group for the General Assembly's consideration and approval as requested in its resolution 67/254 A. The Group therefore requested the Secretary-General to submit that report to the Assembly as soon as possible.

53. The Organization needed clear criteria for determining security needs and evaluating threats and risks worldwide so as to enable the Department of Safety and Security to respond to any emergency. The Group acknowledged the Secretary-General's efforts in developing a standard for safety and security, and the adoption of a security level system by the United Nations security management system. The new risk management model should take into account the mandates for different United Nations activities and the variations in risk and threat levels in different places.

54. Mandated programmes and services must be implemented effectively while ensuring the safety and security of United Nations personnel, premises and assets. The Group would seek further information on the detailed phases, benchmarks and timelines of the programme criticality framework and the programme criticality level, and on the lines of accountability and responsibility and the chain of command for all those responsible for field security, both at duty stations and in the support structures of the United Nations system.

Agenda item 113: Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments (*continued*)

(b) Appointment of members of the Committee on Contributions (*continued*) (A/69/102/Add.2)

55. **The Chair** drew the Committee's attention to the note by the Secretary-General indicating that Mr. Yoo Dae Jong of the Republic of Korea had resigned from the Committee on Contributions with effect from 30 January 2015, that the Government of the Republic of Korea had nominated Ms. Seongmee Yoon to fill the remainder of the term of office expiring on 31 December 2017, and that her candidature had been endorsed by the Group of Asia-Pacific States (A/69/102/Add.2). He took it that the Committee wished to recommend the candidate's appointment by acclamation.

56. *Ms. Seongmee Yoon (Republic of Korea) was recommended by acclamation for appointment to the Committee on Contributions for a term beginning on 30 January 2015 and ending on 31 December 2017.*

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.